

Walking By Faith, Not By Sight

2 Cor. 5:7

Introduction:

- A. The conventional application of this passage strips it of some of its beauty and force.
 - 1. To “walk by faith, not by opinion” a scriptural sentiment, not this passage.
 - 2. To walk “by sight” is to walk by appearance — i.e., by what the eye can see.
- B. The correct application of this passage can be seen by carefully reading the context.
 - 1. Look at things unseen (faith), rather than seen (sight). (4:16-18).
 - 2. At home in body (seen), but absent from Lord (unseen). (5:6-8).
- C. A study the context of this verse and Hebrews 11 gives great insight into this subject.

Discussion:

I. Explanation Of Walking By Faith, Not By Sight.

- A. By faith in the evidence we accept unseen realities--as real as seen realities. (Heb. 11:1).
 - 1. Substance (realization) of things hoped for. (cf. Rom. 8:24,25).
 - 2. Evidence (confidence) in things not seen.
 - a. Did not see creation, but accept its reality based on evidence. (v. 3).
 - b. Did see Jesus, but accept his reality based on evidence. (Rom. 10:6-8,17).
 - c. Did not see much of what we accept as reality: News reports, court testimony, historical events, far-away places.
- B. By faith we understand that what we see on the surface is not the total picture.
 - 1. Assyrian invasion of Israel was more than it appeared to be on the surface. (Isa. 10:5,6)
 - 2. Our present situation on earth is not total picture, there is more to come.
- C. By faith we keep pressing on until we reach "a better country" (Heb. 11:16).
 - 1. Knowing that God will reward those who diligently seek him. (11:6)
 - 2. Knowing that our present problems and pleasures are temporary.
 - 3. Knowing that our present work for Lord is not in vain. (1 Cor. 15:58)

II. Examples Of Walking By Faith, Not By Sight.

- A. *Things not seen.*
 - 1. By faith Paul looked beyond outward man to the inward man. (2 Cor. 4:18-5:10)
 - 2. By faith Paul looked beyond present suffering to future glory. (Rom. 8:18).
 - 3. By faith seven churches of Asia could look beyond surface to reality.
 - a. Sardis apparently alive, but really dead. (Rev. 3:1).
 - b. Laodicea apparently prosperous, but really poor. (Rev. 3:17,18).
 - c. World apparently winning against Christianity, but Revelation shows unseen reality.
- B. *Things hoped for.*
 - 1. *Noah* (Heb. 11:7; cf. 1 Pet. 3:21; 2 Pet. 2:4).
 - a. Moved with fear, to avoid a flood like he had never seen.
 - b. Preached 100 years with little visible results.
 - 2. *Abraham* (Heb. 11:8-19).
 - a. Obeyed without knowing where he was going. (Heb. 11:8).
 - b. Wandered and waited on God's promise. (Heb. 11:9,10,13-16).
 - c. Offered Son based on faith in God's promise. (17-19).
 - d. Only real lapse in faith was in having Ishmael.
 - (1) Caused him grief.
 - (2) Tried to handle God's end of the stick.
 - 3. *Moses* (Heb. 11:23-29).
 - a. He had a real “bird in the hand”.
 - (1) Enough wealth to buy anything he wanted.
 - (2) Enough education to be anything he wanted to be in Egypt. (Acts 7:22)
 - b. He knew pleasures of sin would pass away. (v. 25)

- c. He feared the invisible God, more than wrath of visible king. (v. 27).
 - (1) Enough to keep the Passover. (v. 28)
 - (2) Enough to pass through the red sea. (v. 29).
- 4. *Many Others*. (Heb. 11:32-40).

Conclusion:

- A. We have God's revelation, so:
 - 1. We can walk by faith, not sight.
 - 2. We can see beyond the present circumstance.
 - 3. We can see deeper than the surface.
- B. We have God's promises, so we obey him with confidence.